

THE NEW REPUBLIC

The Miscasting of McCone

A number of highly-placed public servants in Washington who have a professional concern with intelligence and security matters were jarred by the President's unexpected nomination – within a few hours after Congress had adjourned – of John A. McCone to succeed Allen Dulles as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. It was felt that the bounds of prudence had been crossed – not because Mr. McCone is a Republican (the selection of Republican William Foster to head the disarmament agency was excellent), but because the Republican is John McCone, and because the job is CIA. Mr. Kennedy's nominee has been described as a "man of stature." He is that – a well-to-do engineer and industrialist, a tough administrator, a big donor to the Republican Party, a friend of Richard Nixon, a prominent Roman Catholic layman and confidante of ultra-conservative Cardinal McIntyre (Mr. McCone represented the US at the 17th anniversary of Pope Pius XII's coronation in 1956). He is also familiar with Washington bureaucracy, having served as Undersecretary of the Air Force, then as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission from June, 1958, until his resignation was accepted by the new President in January. As successor to the controversial Admiral Strauss, Mr. McCone had made his peace with disgruntled Democrats on the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, in part by giving them information theretofore denied them. But what brought him most attention was his campaign to force a resumption of nuclear testing by the US. In retrospect, the method by which he pursued this aim casts some doubt on the reliability of his judgment. Thus, he said on July 25, 1960, that the test moratorium was a "greater disadvantage" to this country than to the USSR. That must be taken as an indication of his capacity for reliable estimates,

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